

BRADFORD FAMILY STORIES AND A BIT OF GENEALOGY

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INTRODUCTION

Take two parts of English blood (including the DNA) and combine them with one part of “Northern” Irish blood and one part of German blood and what do you get? Let’s find out by the way of Bradford!

By 1850 members of two families married and settled in Bradford, MA. The two families were the Downes (Downs) by the way of Isles of Shoals: Gosport, N.H. on Star Island and adjacent towns in the Portsmouth, N.H. area. They were mainly fisherman and farmers.

The other family was the Reitz family from the Rhine River Valley in western Germany (Dusseldorf). The Reitzes were mostly merchants and scholars. For example, a family member had graduated in 1751 from Friderician University in the Halle-Wittenberg area.

Ben Robert Downes married Wilhemina Reitz in Boston on March 31, 1847 (Boston Vital records). Both became teachers of music. They purchased a 1790’s Bradford house from Leonard Johnson. This house was directly across from Chadwick’s very large field (eight acres). Chadwick’s field would become the new site of Bradford academy in 1868.

Let us now add to this rather unusual mix of fisherman and scholars, two families from western Massachusetts: the Maley’s and Brooks. We now have John Joseph Maley from Leyden (by way of Newburyport) and a member from farmer Josiah Jones Brooks family of Leyden: his daughter, Hattie Eliza Brooks. John and Hattie Eliza married in 1872 and after that date moved to Bradford with their family. This family would reside on a high hill on the south side of Salem Street. Their home overlooked the beautiful Merrimack River Valley.

The families mentioned above: Downes, Reitz, Maley, and Brooks would produce additional professional musicians and music teachers. They would also include a Civil War P.O.W. camp survivor (John J. Maley), a thirteen year old cannon maker, a rear admiral, a navy captain; Navy Cross recipient, a racer of private sports cars and a church-canon-priest: all from Bradford!

The W.W. II Navy Captain was also a key member of Haverhill’s great 1920-21 champion football team under its super football coach Bill Broderick. Shall we now get to the details?

1. Benjamin Robert Downes & Wilhelmina (Reitz) Downes: Musicians & Teachers



Benjamin Robert Downes-Age 62 and Wilhelmina (Reitz) Downes-
Age 60

'Mina was born on May 20, 1825 at Dusseldorf, Prussia. Dusseldorf is on the Rhine river about thirty miles north of Cologne. She was the daughter of Johan Wilhelm Reitz and Marie Therese (Gaggermeyer) Reitz. 'Mina's full name was Johanne Friederike Wilhelmine Reitz, according to her birth certificate.

According to the family story, 'Mina studied music with Clara Schumann, wife of the famous composer Robert Schumann; in fact both Schumanns were noted musicians. The family story is that 'Mina's study with Clara Schumann was done at Frankfort. Seeing the Schumanns never lived in Frankfort, perhaps it was elsewhere. Incidentally, the Schumanns did move to Dusseldorf in 1850, but by then 'Mina had been in the United states for over three years. (In Dusseldorf the Schumanns found the Rhinelanders much more spontaneous and merry than the majority of their Dresden and Leipzig associates, according to a Clara Schumann biography). Perhaps the Rhine wine made the Rhinelanders

more spontaneous.



Wilhelmina (Reitz) Downes

(Johanne Friederike Wilhelmine Reitz)
 From a miniature given to Robert W. Downes
 from David F. Chandler

The Downes family story concerning 'Mina and Benjamin Robert Downes, Jr. is that mutual musician friends started their interest in one another, though an ocean apart. I'm sure there was an exchange of letters and pictures. He may have proposed marriage by letter. At any rate, she sailed for America, arriving by ship in Boston. She probably embarked from Hamburg in late 1843 or early 1844. There was a liberal revolt in 1848 in Europe against prussianism and such, so 'Mina may have been anxious to leave on the strife account too. The 1848 liberal revolt failed.

'Mina and Ben Robert were married "shortly" after her arrival in Boston. Their marriage date is March 31, 1847. (Boston, MA. Vital Records). They both taught music, first at Andover Academy and Abbot Academy (for girls), both in Andover, MA. and finally, they both taught at Bradford Academy, Bradford, MA., (now Bradford College).

At Bradford Academy 'Mina taught languages and was fluent in German, French, Italian and English. She taught the first three languages mentioned above at Bradford. 'Mina also taught art. She specialized in painting miniature watercolor scenes and such. The school records show that she was teaching by 1844 at Abbot.

Ben Robert taught music at Bradford academy and also gave private lessons at his home in piano-forte and organ; also vocal music.

As a matter of interest, Ben Robert received his instruction in the piano, organ, thorough base and in vocal music from A.N. Johnson, organist at Park St. Church, Boston. The instruction covered the period 1840 - 1844.

The Downes family lived at 329 South Main St., directly across the street from the academy. 'Mina and Ben Robert purchased the house in 1850. I have the legal purchase document and it reads that the house was purchased from a Leonard Johnson of Bradford for thirteen hundred dollars and is dated Oct. 24, 1850; boundaries are listed, etc.

In their home, 'Mina had several pieces of furniture that she had brought from Dusseldorf in lieu of money, silver or gold, as the Prussian government put major restrictions on taking money out of the country, so she invested in furniture. The family story is that she brought five sofas (count them - five) and other articles of furniture, china, candelabra, etc., etc. Did she ship the furniture items from Boston to Andover (their first home after Boston), by train? Yes. I'm sure. It would have been rather rough going by horse-drawn wagons. (My grandmother, Marion (Maley) Downes still had one or two of the sofas in her home at 329 South Main St., Bradford up to the time of her death in 1961. What became of it or them? I know not.



One of the five sofas that Wilhelmina brought over from Germany.

To continue: here is a quote from the book, "Bradford, The Story of A New England Academy," by Jean Sarah Pond, published in 1930, "Mrs. Downes as has already been shown, was a linguist and taught German under Mrs. Abby Johnson, (there seem to have been a lot of Johnson's around the area), also she taught French and Italian, if necessary. She was an artist of no small merit, as her miniature-like drawings show. For a few years, (1851-1853), while her husband was teaching music in the Academy, she had a number of pupils in drawing, and would perhaps have continued longer but for family cares" [eventually eight children].

"Painting in oil and watercolors" was officially recognized as art worthy of serious attention and from 1867 the academy catalogue list reads thus: Painting in oil and watercolor, Pastel and Chromatic, Crayon

and India Ink and Drawing. This ambitious program Mrs. Downes and Miss Ellen Carpenter divided between them."

'Mina and Ben Robert Downes had eight children. Several died quite young from the usual childhood diseases of the period, such as diphtheria, caused by a bacillus that causes the air passages to become coated and leather-like), and typhoid fever, caused by another bacillus that effects the intestines. The Downes family may well have used their own well water, but I know that much of the Haverhill area population was using the Merrimack River water for drinking purposes and this water went untreated during most of the 1880's and prior to the 1880's!

Here is a list of their children in birth order:

Fannie Therese, born in 1847 at Chelsea, MA.

Frederick Reitz, born Aug. 21, 1851 at Bradford.

Mary Wilhelmina ("Willa"), born March 7, 1853 at Bradford.

Hattie A" born July 15, 1856 at Bradford; died Oct. 3, 1868.

Benjamin, born in 1863 at Bradford; died Sept. 20, 1868.

Charles, born 1866 at Bradford; died Oct. 9, 1868.

Infant, born in 1868 at Bradford; died 1868.

Herbert William Wingate, born Nov. 20, 1873 at Bradford.

Note: the young children: Hattie, Benjamin, Charles and the unnamed infant, all died of diphtheria within a month of one another! Diphtheria is contagious.

Hattie at age 12 was attending Bradford's Master's School when she contracted diphtheria, It is possible that she acquired it at school, as it was common practice to use a common dipper or cup for drinking water,

Most of the "Mina and Ben Robert Downes, Jr., family are buried adjacent to the Herbert W.W, Downes plot in Elmwood Cemetery on Salem St. Bradford.

Ben Robert died Oct. 30, 1893, at age 70 and 'Mina Died Nov, 19, 1893, at age 68, so they died within twenty days of one another, 'Mina and Ben Robert's gravestones are listed as "Mother" and "Father" adjacent to the Herbert W.W. Downes plot.

As a youngster visiting Bradford, I recall that large framed water-color portraits of several of the 'Mina and Ben R. Downes Jr. children hung in the second floor hallway, I'm certain that these portraits were painted by 'Mina. Who has the portraits now, if anyone?

Note: In reviewing some of the (limited) Wilhelmina (Reitz) Downes material in 1993, I found that a letter from a friend in Frankfort on-the-Main, was dated 1845. The letter was addressed to "'Mina Reitz, in care of A.N. Johnson. Boston, Massachusetts." This letter therefore would place 'Mina in Boston in 1845, if not earlier.

A.N. Johnson was the music teacher for Benjamin Robert Downes Jr. from 1840 - 1844.

Is it possible that Ben Robert and 'Mina actually met while taking music lessons from Mr. Johnson in Boston and that the family story about their earlier international correspondence was just a romantic story and not a fact?

(Mr. Johnson, aside from being a music instructor, was also organist at the Park Street Church on the corner of Tremont Street and Park Street in Boston).

Addendum 1995: Thanks to cousin David F. Chandler, we have a translation (from archaic 1800's German) of the birth data for Wilhelmina's older sister, Mary Ann (anglicized). She was born in 1806, the fifteenth of January, in Dusseldorf. Her full name was Marianne Magdalene Theresia

Reitz. Mary Ann was the first child of Johann Wilhelm Reitz(a merchant) and Maria Theresia Gaggermeyer (two spellings were used in the document for mother's maiden name).

Catholic baptism was Sunday, 19th of January in the home of the parents. Baptism witnesses: Johann Reitz, Johann George Eberle, Frau Mariana Hoffman (Frau Marianne Gaggermeyer(sic) was absent in Regensburg from note on document).

Dave felt that the copy of the document in Dusseldorf, on May 9th 1844 "was probably prepared in anticipation of Mary Anna's possible travel abroad." The document was prepared in her 38th year, shortly before she took up residence in Andover, MA.

According to the town clerk's office in Andover, "Mary Ann" Reitz died on March 1st, 1850 from "consumption"(TB). She was in her 44th year.

Mary Ann taught at Abbot Academy (Andover) from 1845-1846(Reference: The General Catalogue of Abbot Academy:1829-1913, Thomas Todd Printers, Boston, MA.) Reference found at Memorial Hall Library, Andover. From the same source, we find that the younger sister, 'Mina taught at Abbot from 1844-1846 and then "married Benjamin Robert Downes Jr."

So, from the above information, it is very possible that the two sisters came to the U.S. together, sometime after May 9th, 1844.

The Andover town office informed me that "Mary Ann" was buried at the South Church (Congregational) burial ground. A check at the church office computer records had no listing for her. A check at the small (200 stones) Chapel cemetery at Phillips Academy led us to a small rough stone that had "Mary Anna" engraved on it and nothing more. I would guess that this is her burial site!

Bim and I also double checked the death date of 'Mina Downes at the Haverhill city clerk's office and her death date as previously listed was Nov 19th, 1893. She died from pneumonia at age 68. There was no date marked on her stone in the Bradford cemetery: only "Mother" and the

same for Ben Robert Downes Jr., engraved as "Father".

Note #1 Abbot Academy founded in 1829 for girls and Phillips Academy, founded in 1778 for boys merged in 1973 when Phillips became coeducational.

Note #2: The Phillips Academy campus is immense containing a great # of buildings!! I will let you count them!

Note #3(E.F.S.D 5/17/10):

In Gramma Downes' house in Bradford, Dad remembers seeing items that Wilhelmina brought over, such as 2-3 Dresden dolls about 1.5 feet high with porcelain faces and nice clothes. In addition, there was a large, gold colored candelabra with crystal above the fireplace. Dad also remembers family portraits in hallway. The miniatures of Wilhelmina, her brothers and her mother probably were done in Frankfurt, not Dusseldorf.



Downes House: Candelabra with crystal above the fireplace.

Note # 4: The lost Reitz brothers (E.F.S.D 5/17/10)

Our family stories have Wilhelmina's brothers, Johann Friedrich Georg Wilhem Reitz (born 26.5.1808 near Dusseldorf) and Peter Reitz (born between 1809 and 1824 near Dusseldorf) moving to Paris

around 1844 (+/- 3 years), to escape political turmoil in Germany. We have lost track of them....another genealogical challenge!



Above is a miniature portrait of Peter Reitz.
From a miniature given to Robert W. Downes
from David F. Chandler.

Note# 5: Wilhelmina's Mother was Maria Theresia Gaggermeyer, b. Jan 13, 1783 in REGENSBURG, Bavaria.



Maria Theresa (Gaggermeyer) Reitz
From a miniature given to Robert W. Downes
from David F. Chandler

Rudolf Gaggermeier, researching Gaggermeier families, found that Maria Theresa Gaggermeier, had a twin....Regina Jacobina Gaggermeier based upon their identical birth dates in the Dusseldorf parish records.

Correspondence from Rudolf Gaggermeier, In dem Hagen 15, D - 53604 BAD HONNEF, Germany dated February 27, 2007:

"In the meantime Monika Degenhard(Genealogist near Dusseldorf, Germany) replied. She said her information on the Gaggermeyer's are from the Lutheran parish book of Dusseldorf. She gave an additional information:

In that parish book there is also listed: Regina Jacobina Gaggermeier (right: ... meier), Roman Catholic, born in Regensburg Jan 13, 1783, daughter of Georg G. and Maria Beck. She married in Duesseldorf on Nov 01,1805 Georg Graber. It seems that Marie Therese (b. Jan 13, 1783) and Regina Jacobina are twins!"

The Reitz family had a bookstore in Dusseldorf, located at 18 Berger Strasse where they sold toys, rugs and art items. Goethe was a client based a family letter where Goethe was inquiring about a Turkish rug.



18 Berger Strasse, Dusseldorf, Germany, location of Reitz shop(2008).

The Reitz shop was located in the Altstadt (old town) and was next to the Lutheran, Berger Church (Berger Kirche) and in the same area as the famous Zum Uerige Brewery/Bar, serving a well-regarded Altbeir. Afterwards, Wilhelmina's sister, Marianne Reitz, ran the shop the shop selling art and fancy articles before she left for America with Wilhelmina. The area was extensively damaged during the World War 2.



Famous Zum Uerige Brewery/Bar, which existed in the time of Johann Wilhelm Reitz and whose shop was about 200 feet away.

Note - high customer on roof, perhaps a relation?

Johann Wilhelm Reitz, Mina's father, was born in Dusseldorf, May 1st, 1779. His parents were Johann Reitz and Anna Gertrud Jost. Mina's grandfather, Johann Reitz as born in Lennp/Berg. He was married July 20, 1776 in Dusseldorf. Anna Gertrud Jost was from Solingen, a small town 2.5 miles WSW from Berg.

Wilhelmina's grandfather, Johann Peter Reitz, received a degree in Theology in 1751 from Fridericana University. The diploma is written in Latin has the University seal on it. In addition, the archivist from the, now named, University of Halle-Wittenberg, wrote that University records show that Johann started at the University on October 7th, 1748.

The web link to the University is..... <http://www.international.uni-halle.de/university/history/>

Note 5(R.W.D. 2010):

Benjamin Robert Downes (Sr.) was born September 15, 1798 at Newbury, MA (Vital Records). He died July 6, 1871 at Bradford, MA at the home of his son, Benjamin Robert Downes, Jr. and Wilhelmina.

He (Sr.) married Fanny Abbot on July 28th, 1822. She was born January 7th, 1802, daughter of Job and Anna (Ballard) Abbot.

Benjamin Robert Downs, Sr. changed his name to Benjamin Robert Downes ("e") added, February 14th, 1821, Essex County Public Records, Salem, MA. Why the name change? I will let you research that question.

Benjamin Robert Downes, Jr. was born August 3rd, 1823 at Amesbury, MA (VR). Both father and son were Masons.

The above information was researched by John A. Downs, Conway, N.H.; 1979-1980. John is a professional genealogist and is not a relative.



2. JOHN J. MALEY: Civil War Soldier & Andersonville P.O.W.

John Maley was born in Newburyport (MA.), on Jan. 6, 1843 and was one of six children born to James and Catherine (Gallagher) Maley.

"He was descended from a long line of fighters, many of his ancestors having served in the Revolutionary War. His father and brother were also civil War veterans and a son (Charles), served in the Spanish-American War and in World War I as a Sergeant."

Following the death of his mother (childbirth?), John was then two

years old, the family moved to Sunapee, N. H., where his father ran a tannery. At about age eight, he -"ran away" from home, going to Bernardston, MA. and from there to Leyden (nearby), where he was employed by the farmer, Josiah Jones Brooks. He was living in Leyden, when he enlisted in the Union Army on July 13, 1863 at twenty years of age.



Josiah Jones Brooks(1827-1888), father of Hattie Eliza Brooks

He returned to the Brook's farm after the war, where he was nursed back to health by Hattie Eliza Brooks, daughter of his employer. On Dec.3, 1872, they were married at Brattleboro, VT., by Rev. D.C. White, of the First Universalist Church.

But I'm getting ahead of the story!

John enlisted as a Private with Co. H. Capt. William H. Wilson, of the

19th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, on July 13, [or 31st], 1863. He joined his regiment at Greenfield, MA., whence it went to Warrenton, VA. He was with that regiment in its campaign on the Rapidan River (VA.). and was in the thickest of the fight against the Confederates at Bristoe Station, (Bristoe, VA.), a Union victory. Bristoe (Bristow) is about six miles to the west of Manassas Junction.

In the campaign of Mine Run (part of the Wilderness Battle, May 4-6, 1864), he was taken prisoner. Mine Run is to the west of Fredericksburg, VA.

He was first taken to Pemberton prison and later to the infamous Belle Isle prison at Richmond, VA. After several months he was informed with others, that he was to be "sent home" - most likely an outright lie to keep the P.O.W. 's at ease.

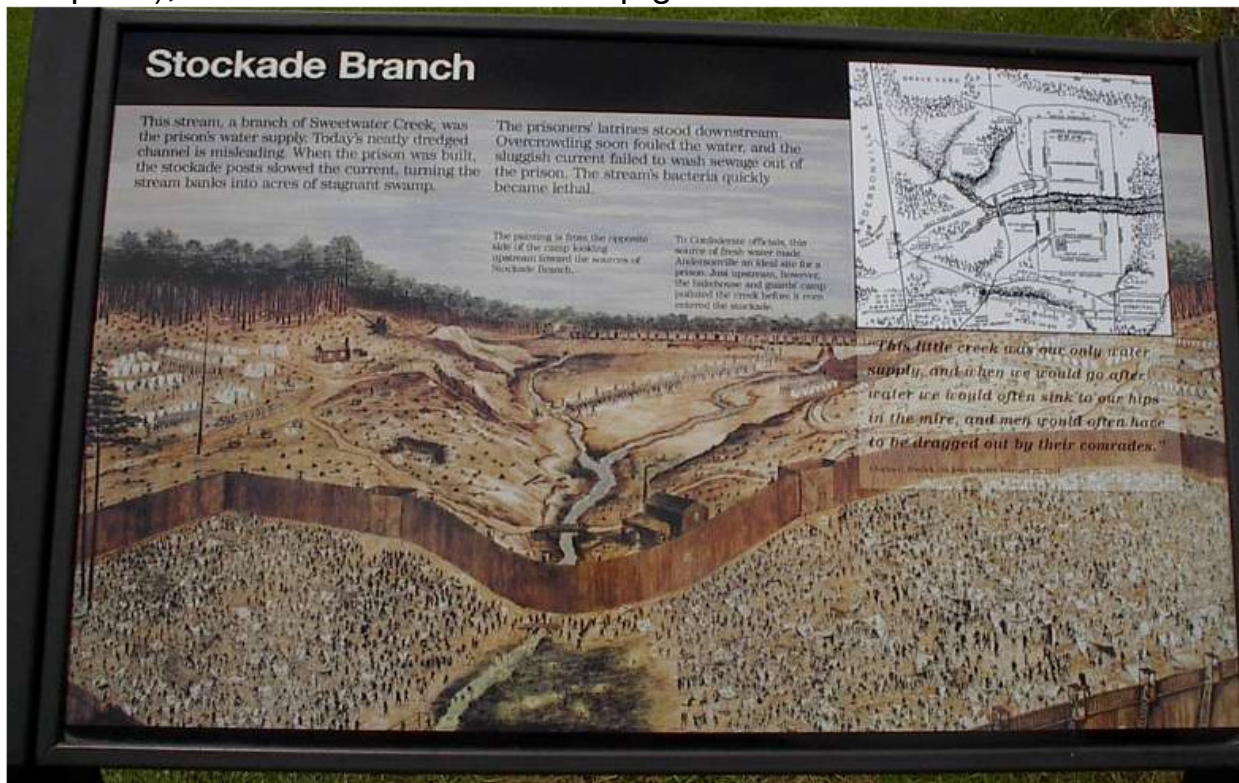
Soon after leaving Belle Isle prison, they learned the truth: they were going to the most infamous P.O.W. camp, at Andersonville (Anderson), in south Georgia. It was at Andersonville that John Maley was to learn the real horrors of war!

"There were some 45,000 Union soldiers; interned in this infamous camp during its fourteen months of operation in 1864-1865. Built for 10,000, it frequently bulged with more than three times that many, as Union army prisoners were transferred from other prisons to prevent their liberation by the advancing Union armies."

When John Maley arrived at the camp, probably in the early fall of 1864, there were perhaps 25,000 to 30,000 P.O.W.'s, most without shelter. some naked, others deformed (amputated limbs) and some almost unrecognizable as human beings, driven crazy!

Makeshift tents (for the fortunate), offered defense against the relentless south Georgia summer heat. For most of the time the main water supply (a stream going through the camp), was very contaminated and with the South plagued by every kind of shortage, food rations were extremely meager at best. More than 13,000 Union soldiers died there from starvation, disease and exposure! Another factor in the high death

rate was the gross mismanagement on the part of the Confederate officials in charge of the camp. The South was short of food, but many of the prisoners were short-changed from their starvation-diet food by greedy (make a profit), southern officials and camp guards.



Ref: Placard-Anderson National Historic Site

When I went to visit my great-grandfather Maley in Bradford, MA., in 1929, I was almost three years of age and he was to die within a month from heart trouble. I recall that he was seated in a comfortable chair. He had his son, Charlie, bring him a hand-painted picture from the living room wall. The picture was in red, white and blue water colors and John Maley pointed out to me certain aspects of the camp picture: the guard towers, the stockade log wall and the dead-line that ran along the interior of the stockade wall and parallel to it. I noticed the makeshift tents (made from old clothing). I never saw the picture again. It would have great value today. Let's hope some family member didn't toss it away. Some people don't realize the value of historical items and such.

When I was older, I found out from R.B. Downes (my father), that anyone going over the *dead-line* (*well* named), would be shot at by the

guards in the watch towers, of which there were 46 towers. The guards shot to kill! The guards from the Georgia Reserves were composed of teenagers and old men and many were trigger happy. The guards from the 26th Alabama were veterans and were more relaxed and deliberate.

R.B. also told me of an interesting situation in the camp concerning camp life span: it seemed the larger and healthier the newcomer to the camp, the sooner he would succumb to the brutal life in the camp. The bigger they were, the quicker they fell. It was the naturally wiry, smaller physical types that most frequently survived and as we might say today, the ones with "street smarts." The camp was apparently just too much of an adjustment *for* the larger man's body to make.

Basically, what the men usually had to eat, was some food made from corn, with only occasional bits of meat or greens. When things got really bad, their daily meal, as mentioned in the accompanying poem, was a pint of "meal ground cob," in other words, they were eating mostly corncobs (no kernels), no corn as such! On this diet John Maley went from about 150 or 155 normal weight pounds, down to about 90 or 95 pounds, a living skeleton!

Some of the inmates tried to escape, a few did and a few made contact with Sherman's raiders, 60,000 men who were marching from Atlanta to the sea in late 1864. When Sherman's men saw the unbelievable living skeletons that had made contact with them, they cried and redoubled their scorched earth policy, leaving nothing worthy of use behind them. This was a swath of destruction sixty miles wide and three hundred miles long. As Sherman said, "War is hell" and he meant it!

Sherman permitted a Union raiding force under General George Stoneman with about 4,000 troopers (cavalry) to make a raid-rescue attempt to rescue the prisoners at Andersonville, but the Confederates repulsed the attempt with heavy losses to the Union soldiers and the capture of General Stoneman.

After living several months under horrible conditions, John received word that he (and others), was to be sent back to the Union lines (Was this part of a prisoner exchange program? Both sides had reached a

lengthy impasse on the exchange policy at one point). After nine or ten months as a P.O.W., John rejoined the Northern ranks at Wilmington, N.C. (a coastal port). This was in March 1865. He was in such a weakened condition, that he was at the point of death! He was eventually sent from Wilmington, N.C. to Munson's Hill, VA., where he rejoined his regiment. General Lee surrendered on April 9, 1865.

John was mustered out of military service June 30, 1865 at Munson's Hill, VA. and the same year he received an honorable discharge from the army at Readville, MA. [Camp Meigs, a Union army training camp was located in Readville (2 miles due east of Dedham- see Meigs field)].

As I have said, John Maley returned to the Josiah Brooks farm at Leyden, MA., where he was nursed back to health by his future wife, Hattie Eliza Brooks. He and Hattie Eliza married on Dec. 3. 1872 and moved to Bernardston, near Leyden and lived there for a number of years.

About 1885, the family moved to Bradford (Haverhill), MA. and purchased a hillside home overlooking the Merrimack River valley. They had a really beautiful view. While they were in Bernardston they had most of their children, six in all: Maude Ellen, Marion Angeline, Charles Earle, Jessie Brooks, John Jr. and Helen Celia (Marion Angeline was to become my Grandmother Downes).



Maley family – circa 1926: L to R, Charles Maley, Maude Haskell, Helen Sowers, John Maley Sr., Hattie Eliza, Jessie Dwyer, Marion Downes, John Maley Jr.

A family story told to me as a youngster, (one never knows whether to believe them or not). I was eight or nine years of age, is that John Maley upon being mustered out of service at Munson's Hill. VA., WALKED home to Leyden. This story sounds a little too strong to be true. If true, which I doubt, perhaps John had spent his mustering-out pay and was broke, or perhaps he had heard about the tragedy of over a thousand ex-Andersonville men bound home for Illinois on a Mississippi River steamboat. The steam engine exploded and the boat burned, killing over a thousand ex-P.O.W.'s! Hearing about this tragedy, perhaps he felt it would be wise to stay away from all steam-powered contraptions. (Play it safe!)

John Maley died on June 11. 1929, at 86 years of age. He died from a heart attack at his home in Bradford at 379 Salem St. The funeral was held at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Herbert W.W. Downes and the

Rev. James Malcolm-Smith, rector of Haverhill's Trinity Episcopal Church officiated. (Item quoted from the "Haverhill Evening Gazette" June 12, 1929).

His wife: Hattie Eliza (Brooks) Maley, died Sept. 25, 1937, at 81 years of age. Both John and Hattie Eliza are buried at Elmwood Cemetery, Salem St., Bradford.

Here is a poem that seems appropriate. It was composed by Sergeant George W. Murray, who "suffered all the horrors of the "Anderson" prison." He did not give the poem a name, so I will. I will call it "Anderson." Actually Anderson was the name of the railroad station where the P.O.W.'s were discharged from the trains.

ANDERSON

Come friends and fellow soldiers

Come listen to my song

About the rebel prison

And enduring there so long,

Our wretched state and hardships great

No one can understand,

But those who have endured this fate

IN DIXIE'S SUNNY LAND

When captured by their chivalry

And stripped unto the skin,
They failed to give us back again
The value of a pin.
Except some filthy rag of grease
Discarded by their band,
And thus commenced our prison life
IN DIXIE'S SUNNY LAND
A host of guards surrounded us.
Each one with a loaded gun
We were stationed in an open field
Exposed to rain and sun
No tent or tree to shelter us,
We lay upon the sand.
And side by side great numbers died
IN DIXIE'S SUNNY LAND
What was our daily bill of fare
In that secesh saloon?
No sugar, tea, nor coffee there
At morning, night or noon.

But a pint of meal ground cob and all

Was served to every man.

For the want of fire we ate it raw

IN DIXIE'S SUNNY LAND

How sad those weary moments seemed,

As weeks and months rolled by.

And yet no tidings came to us

From loved ones far away;

While here we lay to starve and die

Upon the burning sand,

Away from friends and home so dear

IN DIXIE'S SUNNY LAND

When landed at Annapolis.

A wretched looking band.

But glad to be alive and free

From Dixie's sunny land

And having gained our wasted strength,

All dressed in Union blue.

We'll pay them back our vengeance soon,

Or the debt our bitter foe.

There was a rather curious coincidence concerning the "Anderson" poem. During the writing of the story of Grandpa Maley and Andersonville, my wife and I were checking through items in the old barn-garage attic at her mother's house in Providence, R.I. In among a large pile of her family's letters and papers, covering the period 1849-1870. I spotted a pamphlet and picked it up from the floor. It was the pamphlet containing the "Anderson" poem. These letters and papers had rested almost undisturbed for perhaps 70 to 80 years or more, except by mice, and the very day I was typing the Andersonville story, up popped the "Anderson" poem! Unbelievable; weird!

Note #1. My father, Robert Brooks Downes and his brother, Richard visited the Georgia town of Andersonville in the late 1920's to see the site of their grandfather's old P.O.W. camp. According to the brothers, no one they spoke to in that town knew anything about the camp or its location!

Note #2. The Andersonville P.O.W. camp's Commandant was Confederate Captain Henry Wirz, a Swiss-American. After a military trial in Washington, he was found guilty of gross malfeasance of duty and he was hung. (Remember 13,000 Union soldiers died in the camp).

At some time after the war, the Daughter's of the Confederacy had a statue erected to the memory of Captain Wirz and placed in the town of Andersonville!

Obviously, there was a difference of opinion concerning the merits of Captain Henry Wirz! The Daughter's of the Confederacy may have a point in their favor of Captain Wirz! The true super-villain was a Confederate general, namely John Winder, who was in charge of all Confederate prison camps east of the Mississippi River. General Winder consistently worked vehemently against any kind of improvement made on behalf of the P.O.W.'s. Winder died just prior to General Lee's surrender, which was a wise move on Winder's part.

Ironically, Winder apparently died from overeating (involving a choking attack), at a dinner given for Winder by the Confederate officer

staff at Andersonville. Winder was perhaps 200 or 300 yards from the starving P.O.W.'s.

According to one of my references: "Andersonville seems tranquil now. even park-like. But the monuments and the long rows of headstones in the cemetery evoke the horror of suffering and death that took place here."

Note #3. My son, Robert Wingate, visited the site of Belle Isle prison (in the James River, Richmond), and said "there is a new footbridge going out to the very small island; there is a sign mentioning the site and there is a leveling of dirt and grass, nothing more." (summer of 1992).

In my opinion, one major reason for the harsh treatment by the Federal government toward the southern states right after the Civil War, was the northern knowledge concerning the 13,000 needless Union deaths at the extermination camp known as Andersonville. - R.W.D.

Note #4.

Another example of his humor concerned certain personal military background that he passed on to his sons and daughters. John told them that he served in General Armistead's brigade, in General Pickett's division. This is interesting information (from the records of his daughter Jessie Brooks Dwyer), except for the fact that both well known generals were in the Confederate Army! Perhaps John just got tired of having his daughters pester him for details on his Civil War service.

References:

"America's Historic Places," Project Editor: Richard Scheffel, Published by Reader's Digest, 1988.

"Andersonville," by MacKinlay Kantor, World Publishing Co., 1955.

"Haverhill Evening Gazette," newspaper, June 12, 1929.

"History of the Nineteenth Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry 1861-1865", Compiled by Ernest L. Waite, Salem Press Co. 1906, Salem,

MA. pp 397, 364-365, 367 & 275.

Pamphlet (from Civil War Period), by Sergeant George W. Murray.

Richard Downes

Robert Brooks Downes

Robert Ward Downes

Robert Wingate Downes

John J. Maley

Note: Sergeant George W. Murray also wrote a Civil War book: "The Life and Adventures of Sergt. G. W. Murray," Minneapolis. Herald Publishing House. 1872.

Dad had a snapshot picture of Grandpa Maley when he was 60 riding a ostrich in St. Augustine Florida. The picture has been lost. Possibly at Casper's *Ostrich* and Alligator Farm in St. Augustine. (EFSD 6/11)

Addendum 10/1/10(R.W.D.) Liz Chandler secured this pension document on John Maley from the Federal Bureau of Pensions.

3-337.
(Old No. 3-464aa.)

Easton Div., *2d*, Ex'r.

Department of the Interior,
BUREAU OF PENSIONS,

Washington, D. C., Jan. 22, 1903.

Respectfully referred to the Chief of the
Record and Pension Office, War Department,
requesting a full military and medical his-
tory of the soldier, with personal
description and age at
date of enlistment.

Enclosure

No other report on file.

Cart. No. 691, 1884.

Name, John Maley,
Co. H, 19th Reg't Mass. Inf.

J. L. Hammett
Acting Commissioner.

Address: "Chief of the Record and Pension Office,
War Department, Washington, D. C."

Record and Pension Office,

WAR DEPARTMENT.

Respectfully returned to the

Commissioner of Pensions.

John Maley
Co. H, 19th Reg't Mass. Inf.
was enrolled a substitute July 31, 1863,
and M.O. June 30, 1865.

(mustered out)

From acceptance 1863 to M.O. 1865
he held the rank of private.

and during that period the rolls show him present
except as follows:*

Dec. 31/63 Deserted Nov. 29,
1863 near Germania
Ford, Va.

Next borne on roll to
Apr. 30/65 when reported
present. Dropped by
desertion on a previous

* Correction: should read "Captured"

roll, but has reported to
the company having
been a prisoner of
war.

Co. M.O. roll dated June 30/65
shows him returned
to Co. May 17, 1865.

P. & W. records show him
captured at Rapidan, Va.,
Dec. 2, 1863 - confined at
Richmond, Va., Dec. 5, 1863;
sent to Andersonville, Ga.,
Feb. 18/64 - Paroled at A.E.
Ferry, N.C. Feb. 26/65 - Re-
ported at C.P.B. Md. Mch 5/65
at C.P. Md. Mch. 7/65 - Fur-

The medical records show him treated as follows -
loughed Mch 17 1865 for
30 days; returned Apr.
3/65 and sent to camp
Dist. Alex., Va. May 3/65

Records show age at
enrollment 20 years;
height 5 feet 4 inches;
complexion light;
eyes blue; hair brown;
born in Newburyport, Mass;
occupation laborer.
No record found of
treatment.



3. Frederick Reitz Downes: Bradford's Master's (Grammar) School Trouble-Maker and Bradford Postmaster

Fred R. Downes, a future Postmaster for Bradford, MA., was the second born of Wilhelmina (Reitz) and Benjamin Robert Downes Jr. He was born Aug. 21, 1849 at Andover, MA. and he died July 1, 1904 in Bradford.

Fred attended school as a 12-13 year old (and after), in 1862 - 1863 at the Bradford Grammar School, near the Common in Bradford. This school was known as the "Master's School," according to Arthur Hall in his book, "Old Bradford School Days."

Let's follow Fred for two days as he undertook his early education: "Early in the afternoon session, Fred Downes, pressing the air from a hollow rubber ball, caused it to cling to his upper lip, and facing the girls, he would pretend to cry. He soon found himself beside the Master's desk,

and in reply to a question said, " I was only pretending it hurt."

After dancing an accompaniment to the leather strap for three minutes, he was sent back to his desk with the comforting words: "Now you can pretend that hurt." Andy Beattie, for laughing out loud at this incident, came in a close second to Fred in the matter of punishment and quiescence."

The standard routine at the "Master's School" for the "good" boys during a strapping, was to accompany the landing of the strap, by bringing down their right feet with a vicious stamp on the wooden floor, in sort of a anvil-chorus accompaniment to the cries of the "bad" boy and the splat of the strap. The "good" boys took care to sit erect and motionless above the waist, while exercising their right legs, (The old fashioned desks screened the legs from the view of the Master.)

When a bit older, Fred had a cannon two feet long, made from the steel axel of the driving wheels of a locomotive at the Hinckley works in Boston. A week or two before the Fourth of July, 1863-ish, Fred brought the cannon to school to show it to the boys [and girls?]. Someone produced some gunpowder and just before school, the cannon loaded to the muzzle with paper, stones and wads of grass, was fired off in the direction of the outbuildings behind the schoolhouse.

"The report was deafening to the boys standing nearby and the door of the boys' outhouse was split and a respectable hole for any gun to make was blown out of the building"!

The report of the School Committee for the year (1863), contains the following paragraph: "Owing to circumstances which it is not necessary to mention in detail, this school has been regarded as a difficult one to teach, and in some instances, the teacher has had trouble in controlling it." [I certainly hope that Fred was not a factor behind this statement].

Note: I believe that the summer term at that period (Civil War), ended in mid-July.

Fred Downes married Katherine M. Harvey in 1876 and they had two

children: Fred Harvey, born June 11, 1883, who died in an auto accident in San Francisco, CA. in 1910, and Christine F., born June 27, 1885. She married a Mr. Ashcom (R.B. note: Mr. Ashcom was a chemistry professor at Columbia University in NYC) and she died July 22, 1969 at Georges Mills, N.H. She is buried at Rural Cemetery, Worcester, MA. Christine was an accomplished pianist and composer of music for school children. She resided at Georges Mills during the summer and at Bath, ME. during the winter; a most congenial person. [R.W.D.]

In a letter to me dated 18 January 1971. Robert Brooks Downes said (in response to my inquiry): "that not only was Fred Downes the Bradford Postmaster, he was also a master carpenter and builder." "He built his own home on Kingsbury Avenue, in sight of the Downes family house at 329 South Main St.. and he also built several churches: including one in South Groveland and one in Georgetown (towns near Bradford). R.B. said that both churches, just mentioned, are still in use.

Note# 1: We have two birth years and places of birth for Fred. We have the Andover birthplace and also Bradford. We have 1849 and 1851. Fred's daughter was born at 31 Kingsbury Ave., which I assume was the house Fred built.

Note# 2: ED- 1880 Census shows Fred @ 31 years of age being born in 1849 in Massachusetts, no specific town is shown. Fred Downes' grave is located at Elmwood Cemetery on Salem Street in Bradford, approximately 100 feet from the Downes plot.

References:

"Old Bradford School Days," by Arthur Howard Hall, Plimpton Press, Norwood, MA.. 1910.

Robert B. Downes, Letter dated January 18, 1971.

Robert Ward Downes, Several visits and conversations with Christine (Downes) Ashcom in 1967 and 1968, both at Georges Mills. N.H. and at Bath, ME.

Addendum 12/01/10:

Fred's Master School in Bradford was located at the present day intersection of S. Main St. and S. Park Street. It was on the south side of Main Street and directly across Main Street from the Frank Croston House.

Chadwick's large field (directly across from the Downes House) was just to the south (and uphill) from Fred's school. Chadwick's field would in 1868 become the present site of the present day Bradford College.

The Downes children had to walk only about 100 yards to get to the Master School. Post 1884, the Master School building was cut into 2 parts and became part of other housing in Bradford, according to author Arthur Hall.

4. Herbert William Wingate Downes: Musician, Teacher and Choirmaster



Herbert William Wingate Downes

Herbert was the last born of Benjamin Robert Jr. and Wilhelmina (Reitz) Downes children. 'Mina was nearly fifty years of age, when Herbert was born on November 20, 1873, at Bradford, MA.

Having an older brother, Fred, who was twenty-two years older, must have been a hard act to follow, After all, Fred owned a cannon! (See

chapter on Fred Downes). Also Herbert had an older sister, Fannie Therese, who was born in 1847. She was twenty-six years older than Herbert, but she was, most likely, living away from home by then.

Herbert received training in music from his father, Ben Robert Jr., starting at three years of age. In 1888, at age fifteen, young Herbert presented a clarinet solo as part of a performance of the Boston Beethoven Concert Company in Boston. One solo he presented was "Luisa di Monfort" by Bergson. A newspaper quote went: "The clarinet solo rendered by Master Downes was exceedingly fine and showed remarkable execution for a person of his age." Here is another newspaper quote: "The clarinet is a difficult instrument and Master Herbert Downes is a young performer, but he bids fair to rank among the best experts."

Herbert was trained in the organ, initially with Dr. Henry S. Cutler of Boston, a well-known teacher of organ and voice. He later studied with S. B. Whitney of Boston, beginning his career as boy organist at Trinity Episcopal Church in Haverhill, MA. He was organist and choirmaster at St. Stephen's Church in Boston for sixteen years, where he had considerable success and he was organist and choirmaster at All-Saints' Episcopal Church in Providence, R.I. from May 1924 to May 1932. (His starting at All-Saints' in 1924 may tie-in with his son, Robert Brooks Downes, being enrolled at Brown University at Providence, in 1924.)

I have been told that one of his All-Saints' choirboys was the young Nelson Eddy, who in the 1940's would become a famous singer and film star, appearing in films with the popular singer Jeanette McDonald.

"He was a composer of merit, being better known for his compositions for the Episcopal service, although he did not confine his talents to sacred music entirely."

Herbert was also Supervisor of Music in the public schools of Haverhill and directed the Haverhill High School Band, both in school and when they appeared at football games.

He must have enjoyed directing the band at the Haverhill football games as either one or both of his sons starred in Haverhill High football

from 1918 - 1923!

Herbert was well known to many New England people through his outdoor summer concerts at Hampton Beach, N.H., which he conducted for several summers. His son, Robert Brooks, played clarinet and saxophone in this summer concert band.



Haverhill Military Band –1922, Playing summer concert at Hampton Beach, N.H. Herbert Downes, Bandmaster, middle row, center.

Herbert W.W Downes Bandmaster

R.B. Downes top row with sax, next to tuba player.

Herbert, (Where did he find the time?), also gave private piano lessons in the large music room of his home at 329 South Main St., Bradford, as did his father before him.

Speaking of the music room, a family story goes thusly: his younger son Richard. at about age twelve or thirteen, while showing a hand gun to a young friend in an upstairs bathroom, (the one over the music room), pulled the trigger of the "unloaded" gun and shot a hole through the music room ceiling. His father was giving a piano lesson below. (Let us hope that it was the "1812 Overture" that was being played). Young Richard rapidly found that there was a lesson to be learned from this incident. (Where did young Richard get the gun?) .



Downes family – 1913 (father Herbert missing), from left clockwise: Mother (Marion), Madeline-age 13, Robert Brooks-age 10, Richard-age 8.

That there was a definite musical talent in certain members of this

family there is little doubt. Note the abilities of Wilhelmina: Clara Schumann didn't take untalented pupils. Benjamin Robert Jr. was very talented in organ, piano and in teaching vocal music, according to his instructor in Boston, A.N. Johnson. Mr. Johnson's opinion was backed by the Boston music critic Lowell Mason. Herbert's talents are praised by music critics in this article, (see references). The daughter of Fred Downes: Christine (Downes) Ashcom was "an accomplished pianist and composer of childrens' music."

I can remember, as a four or five year old, this very good man, my grandfather, Herbert Downes, taking me on occasional Sunday afternoons from Providence to Bradford by steam-train to visit my grandmother, Marion (Maley) Downes. I can recall that the monster locomotives scared me, with all their huffing, panting and clatter. The Bradford trip involved four train stations: Providence, South Station(Boston), North Station (Boston) and then either the Bradford or the Haverhill Station (across the Merrimack River from one another). Yes, Bradford had it's own station! I would stay the week in Bradford, at 329 South Main, making friends with "Whiteface" and "Blueberry Eyes," (mother of "Whiteface"),the household cats. Come Friday afternoon we would return to Providence. So every weekend Herbert would make the four - train - stations round trip from Haverhill to Providence.

Note: The name "Wingate" in Herbert's name was given him by his father, (Benjamin Robert Jr. to honor a good friend, Charles Wingate of Trinity Episcopal Church in Haverhill. Charles Wingate and Benjamin Robert Downes Jr. established the first Sunday School at Trinity on June 17, 1855. The two men were also elected the first Senior and Junior Wardens of the newly organized Trinity Church, (Oct. 8,1855).

Note: In addition to the Haverhill High School Band, Herbert also had charge of the high school orchestra and the high school glee club.

Note: Herbert graduated from the old Bradford High School in June of 1890.

Note: * Concerning the last name of the Boston music critic: the last

name was Mason. His endorsement of Benjamin was on a paper dated: Boston, December 11, 1844. The signature of his last name was cryptic. His note reads as follows: "Mr. Johnson is one of the best teachers of music in the city and I have great confidence in his opinion [of B.R. Downes Jr.]. I can also add that from personal acquaintance, I have formed a favorable opinion of Mr. Downes and am fully prepared to hear of his successful teaching." The well known critic was Lowell Mason of Boston, who composed the melody for the Christmas song "Joy to the World".

Herbert W.W. Downes died at 57 years of age, (June 23, 1932) in the same house in which he was born, (329 South Main St., Bradford, MA.).

References:

"Choir History of All Saints' Memorial Church, Providence, R.I. - 1858-1941," by Howard Hagan and Frank Vinton Brown, Printed by the Roger Williams Press, 1942.

"Trinity Church, Haverhill, MA., 1855-1955," no author listed.

"Haverhill Gazette," Dec.10, 1888. (clarinet solo). (Music critic on "Haverhill Evening Gazette," June 23, 1932. (Obituary) .

5. Robert Brooks Downes: Athlete, Professor & Navy Hero



*Robert Brooks Downes, 1920, Haverhill, MA High School, Left Half Back,
1920 High School Champions of Eastern U.S.
507 points in 14 games (14 wins-0 loss)*

"R.B." as I called him, (my father), was a winner in most all ways. He never made "big" money, but he excelled at most any endeavor that he tried. He had his faults, as we all do, but his positives far overcame his negatives.

Robert Brooks Downes was born on Jan. 10, 1903 at Haverhill, MA., son of Herbert and Marion (Maley) Downes.

He had early training in music with his father Herbert, starting with the clarinet and then later on, R.B. added the saxophone; just like President Clinton!

R.B. was an above average student at Haverhill High School. He and his younger brother by two years, Richard, were very fortunate to have had as their football coach, William Broderick. Bill Broderick was probably the top high school football coach on the east coast in the 1920's, putting together a 43 consecutive game winning streak while at Haverhill. (He later, 1924, went on to Salem, MA. and became the highest paid high school football coach in the country).

To show the power of Broderick's 1920 Haverhill" football team, (R. B.'s senior year and Richard's sophomore year), here is a summary of the record: Schoolboy champions of the east coast, defeating Duval High School of Jacksonville, FL. for the East Coast Championship at Jacksonville, with all local officials ,("homers"), 27 - 0. This football game was the first North - South football game! Athletic history was made that day!

R.B. used to tell the story of the little black boy, who answered to the name of Sam Jones. Sam attached himself to the Haverhill team when they arrived in Jacksonville in late December 1920. He soon became the coach's (Bill Broderick's) "gofer" during their stay. Sam was at every Haverhill practice session and his eyes would bulge when he watched the big Haverhill linemen charge - and they were big - Blake, Miller, Maistrofsky and Mansfield, all weighed well over 200 pounds and for big men, they could really move (Broderick listed their official weights as 165 on the game program, tricky).

On the day of the big game, Coach Bill asked Sam Jones who he was betting on. Sam looked at Coach Bill very sadly and answered "Mr. Broderick, mah heart is with Duval, but mah money is on Haver-hill" (-smart boy!).

To continue, the Haverhill team in 1920 scored 507 points in fourteen games, (14 wins and no losses). They defeated Newton, MA. ,(just west of Boston), for the New England Championship.

R.B. played the position of halfback and brother Richard played on the line, at guard. R.B.'s playing weight his senior year was 175 lbs, and his height was 6' 1" His best game was against Newton in the N.E. Championship game, when he made a 56 yard kick that rolled out of bounds on Newton's two yard line! "He was also an outstanding ball carrier and passer," according to eastern MA. sportswriters.

After graduating from Haverhill High School in 1921, he was awarded an athletic scholarship to Phillips Andover Academy, at Andover, MA. He played football for one year at Andover and then gained a football scholarship to Brown University in 1924. He played for the Brown freshmen team and injured his knee. That was "it" at Brown. The athletic trainers weren't that good back then and they didn't have the rehabilitation equipment that we have today.

After Brown, R.B. played one season, as a substitute; for a professional football team: the Boston Redskins. The team later went to Washington, D.C. and became the Washington Redskins.

In Providence, R.I., on May 25, 1925, R.B. married Elizabeth Ward, daughter of Elmer C. and Helen (Carr) Ward. The wedding was at All-Saints Episcopal Church. The organist was Herbert W.W. Downes. A son, Robert Ward Downes, was born on June 9, 1926 in Providence. About a year later my mother and father divorced.

In 1928, R.B. won a football scholarship to a newly opened school, the University of Miami, at Coral Gables, FL. Why did they name the new school "Miami"? Miami was a well known name by 1925, however few people had ever heard of "Coral Gables."

R.B. accepted a four year scholarship and played all four years. (There were few restrictive college eligibility rules in the 1920's and 1930's). He graduated from Miami with an A.B. degree in 1931.

Late one summer, about 1928, while driving down from Haverhill to the University of Miami, in his dirty, dusty Dodge touring car with four other football players from the greater Boston area, R.B. ran into a problem. The problem was that the carload of tough-looking football players matched a rough description of a gang of Florida bank robbers and R.B. and the football players were now in Florida! An alert was put out and Florida police officers stopped the Downes car near Daytona Beach with a roadblock. The football players were greeted with drawn revolvers, shotguns and a road barricade of police cars!

It took a while for the players to prove that they were not in the banking business. (A rifle on the rear window shelf of the car didn't help matters). Actually, their major crime on the long run down to Florida, (two lane highways all the way down and one way wooden bridges in the southern half of Georgia). was to run out of food money - the peanut butter ran out! Thus, several orange and grapefruit plantations and also some coconut trees were raided, in order to help stave off football-player starvation.

On the early football schedules at Miami, (1929 - 1930), were such football "powerhouses" as the University of Havana, (Give me a break.), Middle Tennessee State and Rollins College (FL.). etc. Last year, 1992, Miami was the national collegiate champion and for 1993 they were runners-up, quite a contrast!

After graduation from Miami in 1931, R.B. taught history and coached all major sports, except winter ice and snow sports. at Clark School in Hanover, N.H. This school served as a prep. school (private), for Dartmouth College. R.B. was at Clark until it closed in 1935 - the Great Depression cut enrollment and the school's treasurer made off with the liquid assets of the school.

While in Hanover, R.B. met his second wife to be: Mary Ellen (Yates) Leonard. She was owner-manager of the White Photography Studio in Hanover and had the Dartmouth College yearbook contract. R.B. also adopted Mary Ellen's five year old daughter. Patricia. (I later coached Pat to become a great rummy player).

In 1936, R.B. received a Master's Degree in English from Middlebury College, VT. (and in 1951, a Master's in Business Administration from the U. of Miami).

R.B. next taught at Ponce De Leon High School in Coral Gables. FL. for one year and then in 1937 or 1938 was appointed a history instructor at the nearby University of Miami. Later he transferred to the School of Business Administration at the university and taught economics.

About that time, (1938) R.B. had the son of the infamous Al (Scarface) Capone in one of his economics classes. "Scarface" had a small estate in nearby Miami Beach. His son Alphonse Jr. was a good student and received a letter grade of "A" in economics. (What else?) - Alphonse Jr. was also an excellent marksman on the pistol team at the U. of M.

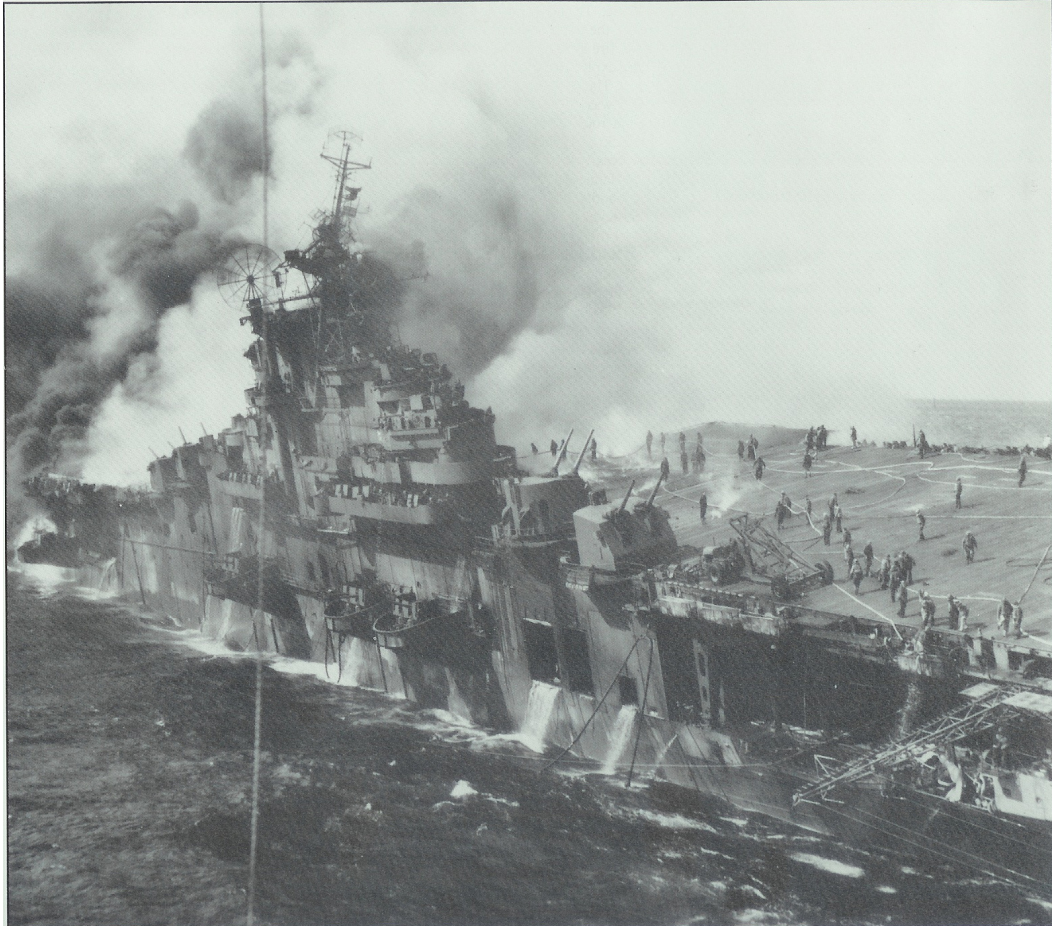
In 1941, with our entry into WW-2, R.B. volunteered (at age 38), for the U.S. Navy. He was trained as a "90 Day Wonder," (one became an officer with just 90 days of very intense training). He trained at Northwestern University in IL. This was a super cram course of condensed naval instruction.

His first assignment was to the U.S. Navy base at Key West, FL. He had the rank of Lt.(junior grade) and he became the Naval District's Recreation and Recruit Training Officer.

He was ordered to sea duty in the Pacific in Jan.1942, with assignment on the U.S.S. "Long Island," a CVE-1 Aircraft Carrier (Escort). His duties were to act as the ship's First Lt. and Damage Control Officer. The First Lt. has charge of all the ship's maintenance and general upkeep. Aboard ship the term "First Lt." is a JOB title and NOT a rank.

R.B. spent 33 months on the "Long Island"! In 1943, he was promoted to Lt. Comdr. and in December of 1944, he was ordered to duty aboard the large attack carrier: U.S.S. Franklin", CV-13 (Oh!. Oh!), with continuing duties as First Lt. and Damage Control Officer.

While serving aboard the "Big Ben", which on March 19, 1945 was operating 53 miles off Japan (Kyushu) at the time of 07:08, the "Franklin" was hit with two 500 pound armor piercing Japanese bombs. The ship's planes: Hellcats, Helldivers and Corsairs, were all high-octane, gased up, ammoed up and on the flight deck for a mission over Japan. Two or three of our planes had already taken off, when the Jap plane, a twin-engined "Betsy" had come down through our air cover protection through a hole in the heavy overcast.



From: USS Franklin (CV-13), The Ship That Wouldn't Die

"The ensuing damage was the greatest to any ship in all history of sea battle damage in which the ship remained afloat". Casualties were 1109 dead and 1800 wounded! "Only 29 of Lt. Comdr. Downes's 118 man damage control crew were still alive." (Quote from May 28, 1945 "Time" Magazine).



The Franklin awaits assistance as flames and smoke roll off its sides.

From: USS Franklin (CV-13), The Ship That Wouldn't Die

Only 774 men remained to operate the huge ship. Oh yes, the "Betsy" was shot down by one of the "Franklin's" planes that had been launched prior to the Jap attack!

The battered ship was towed for several days and then managed to get underway on its own, at much reduced speed. Emergency overhaul was done at Ulithi. (in the Caroline Islands), and further overhaul was done at Pearl Harbor, prior to the "Franklin" proceeding to the U.S. mainland.

"When we got to the Navy Yard, Pearl Harbor, we met a strange reception. Our mooring area was right alongside the submerged "Arizona" and "Oklahoma". On the dock was a huge 150 piece Navy Band and to one side, a 300 person Wave (female) Choir in seersucker uniform. This was a touching scene, as it was the procedure adopted only for events of great heroism."

"After the Navy Band and the 300 Wave Choir had sung "Anchor's Aweigh", there was a moment of quiet. Then our remaining band of three, consisting of a clarinet, trombone and a drum, blared forth from the

seventy foot elevation of the flight deck. They played "California Here I Come", as if they were in Symphony Hall."

"It had a very strange effect on all. There was another lull, and then a sound. the like of which I never heard before or since. It was the voice of 300 Waves and 150 Navy Bandsmen on the docks. They had seen the vast physical damage to the ship and had heard the spirit of "Big Ben" as reflected by our little remaining band of three, and all these good people on the dock were victims of spontaneous and unashamed crying at the tragedy before them."

The brave crew and their ship finally made it back to Brooklyn, N.Y. Navy Yard, where the "Franklin" was rebuilt.

For his damage control work aboard the "Franklin", Robert Brooks Downes received the Navy Cross, which is the highest medal awarded by the U.S. Navy; he also received a second Purple Heart for wounds. He had received the Purple Heart earlier for wounds received while aboard the aircraft carrier "Long Island".

While the "Franklin" was being rebuilt, R.B. was sent to Bremerhaven, Germany to assist in bringing the German prize of-war. the pocket battleship (actually a heavy-cruiser), "Prinz Eugene" to the United States and thence to Bikini in the south Pacific for the "Able" atomic test." R.B. would eventually become second-in-command of this ex-Nazi ship. (See chapter (unit) on the "Prinz Eugene").

R.B.retired from the navy service with the navy rank of Captain. (1952). As the next navy rank above navy Captain is that of Commodore. this promotion was unusual for a navy reserve officer, an honor!

Upon separation from the service in 1946, (He remained in the naval reserve.), R.B. returned to the U. of Miami. His leave of absence had been from 1941 to 1946. He resumed his university teaching in the field of economics.

He was named Coach of Cross-Country at the university in 1956. R.B. resigned from teaching economics in 1958 and in the same year was

named Head Coach of Track and he coached Cross-Country and Track until 1968.

While still a Professor at the university, he was made President of the Board of Directors for the American College Foundation, which granted college scholarships, primarily in the southeastern states.

R.B. had divorced Mary Ellen (Yates) Leonard-Downes, (It is hard to keep up.), and in 1958, he married Catherine "Katie" McWorter. the widow of the Colonel in charge of MacDill Air Force Base at Tampa, FL. (The Colonel had been killed in a flying incident over the Gulf of Mexico).

R.B. and Katie purchased a home at New Smyrna Beach, FL. (905 North Peninsular Ave.). They were just one block from the beach and just across the street from the inland waterway - plenty of salt water for a retired navy Captain.

R.B. died April 19, 1979 at 76 years of age. He is buried at Woodlawn Cemetery, Miami, Florida.

Note: R.B. had been a member of Theta Delta Chi social fraternity at Brown University, a member of the Iron Arrow, mens' honor society at the University of Miami, a member of the Masons, Featured Savings Bonds Public Speaker for the U.S. Navy, while at Brooklyn Navy Yard and attached to the "Franklin," Commander of the Coral Gables American Legion Post, boxing announcer on several national broadcasts from Miami and referee for the greater Miami area high schools; also he had played alumni football against the Miami varsity teams. This last item (player for the university alumni team), reminds me of a story that R.B. used to tell:

One of the members of the 1920-21 Duval High School team that R.B. had played against, was a certain Abe Goldstein, whom had become a lawyer in the Miami area. He also refereed football: high school and college. When R.B. reported to Goldstein, the referee in the 1951 U. of M. Alumni-Varsity Football game, Goldstein couldn't believe it! He threw his official's cap to the ground and shouted: " I played against you in 1921, I watched you play (for the university), in 1931 and here I am refereeing for you in 1951!" Don't you ever give up, Downes?"

R.B. had been playing football on-and-off for more than thirty years! Tough? That man was tough!

As a note of possible interest: In a news report from the May 29, 1945 "N.Y. Daily Mirror" newspaper, the paper quoted from a speech made by Lt. Comdr. Robert B. Downes to the Greater New York Fund Committee, to the effect that the only known woman "Jap" prisoner-of-war is now in custody at Pearl Harbor. "Downes said the woman, found sniping from a coconut tree in the western Marshall Islands, was brought aboard his carrier (U.S.S. "Long Island"). "She was a tough little customer, about 29 years old, weighed 90 pounds, came from Kobe, Japan, had a high school education and was quite attractive."

"In my opinion, she was just as dangerous as any other P.O.W. and we treated her just the same. We cut her hair, gave her two square meals and a half hour of sun a day. She raised an awful stew about the haircut, but two sailors held her and off it came.



COMMANDER ROBERT B. DOWNES

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
Commander First Carrier Task- Force

In the name of the President of the United States, the Commander First Carrier Task Force, Pacific, presents the NAVY CROSS to:

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER ROBERT B. DOWNES
United States Naval Reserve
for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For distinguishing himself by extraordinary heroism in operations against the enemy while serving as First Lieutenant of an aircraft carrier which was striking the main Japanese islands near Kobe, on 19 March 1945. After his ship was hit in an enemy air attack, there followed a series of violent explosions of ready bombs, rockets and ammunition which caused severe damage to the ship, and which at times made it appear that its loss was inevitable. Immediately after the initial bomb hit, and in the face of continuing explosions and further enemy air attacks, he courageously and fearlessly directed efforts to control damage. With utter disregard for his personal safety, he visited various damaged spaces of the ship, organizing and directing numerous fire fighting, rescue and bomb disposal parties. Early in the action he successfully stopped the increasing list of the carrier, which was interfering with her maneuverability and the efforts to save her. His prompt and gallant actions contributed greatly to the ultimate saving of the ship. His courageous conduct was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

M.A. MITSCHER,
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy.

Note: According to John A. Downs, a genealogist from Conway, N.H., many of our Downs and Downes family originated from the Isles of Shoals, its main town of Gosport, N.H. and immediate main-land towns: Portsmouth, N.H., Newbury, MA and Newburyport, MA.

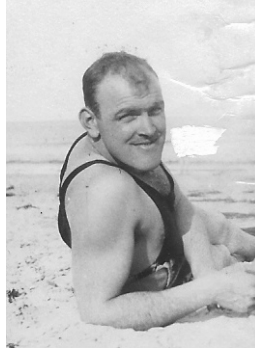
Also, according to this same genealogist “Benjamin Robert Downs changed this name to Benjamin Robert Downes, 14 Feb. 1821: Essex County Probate Records Office at Salem, MA.”

Benjamin Robert, Sr. died 6 July, 1871 at 167 Main Street (later changed to 329) Bradford (Haverhill), MA, at the home of Benjamin Robert Downes Jr. and his wife Wilhelmina (Reitz) Downes, across from Bradford Academy.

My father, R.B.D., told me that when he was a boy (about 1910ish?), he and his father (Herbert W.W. Downes) visited Gosport and that “most everyone they met was a Downs.” (no “e”) RWD

John A. Downs of Conway, N.H. was hired by my step-sister Patricia Downes of Rockville, MD and Florida to do genealogical research on the Robert and Richard Downes family in 1979 and 1980. Thank you very much Pat! (RWD)

6. Richard Downes: Speedster and Gunster



Dick Downes, Hampton Beach, N.H. 1930's

Richard Downes was born April 12, 1905 in Bradford, MA. He was the youngest child of Herbert W.W. and Marion (Maley) Downes. (Their eldest child was Madeline Reitz born in 1900 and then Robert Brooks born in 1903).

My Uncle Dick, as I remember him in his prime, was about 5' 8 inches tall, with light brown hair and light blue eyes. His weight was about 180 pounds and his build was fairly stocky. Physically, he was quite strong. He was basically a good-humored man, unless he was contemplating the "evil" doings of the MA democrats, such as the infamous Mayor Curley of Boston or the equally infamous mayor of Newburyport, who was pictured full page in "Life" magazine sitting in a Miami, FL. gutter filled with running water, the mayor being quite drunk. Casual mention of the MA Kennedy family would also "turn him on." Though according to my son, Robert Wingate, he did like some aspects about John Kennedy.

Many of his childhood days were spent bathing in the water fountain at Bradford Academy, which was just across South Main Street from his home. The academy also had a fair size pond that could be used for illegal fishing, if one didn't mind catching large goldfish. I'm sure the fact that the Boston and Maine railroad tracks and two stations were just a half mile from their home must have been an attraction for the two young brothers. Bradford had its station, while perhaps 400 yards away across

the Merrimack River was the larger Haverhill Depot, with two levels. This Boston and Maine railroad line was a busy one around the year 1912 when Richard was seven years of age.

Young Richard attended the Cogswell Grammar School, which was just south of his home, both being on South Main Street, west side. Cogswell School was a substantial two story brick building. I would guess it was built around 1900.

Richard was a graduate (1923) of Haverhill High School. To attend the school, he had a two mile walk, one way. One would walk down the hill on South Main to the Bradford Common and to Bradford village, then across the Merrimack River bridge and up the hill to the high school. Not a bad walk in good weather, but no fun in poor weather. But remember, his father, Herbert, also had to go to the high school as he was Supervisor of Music, Band Master, etc., so I imagine that an occasional auto ride was in order for Richard and R.B.

Dick and R.B. (my father), both played varsity football for the famous high school football coach Bill Broderick.

The brothers were on Broderick's East Coast Championship team of 1920-21. Dick played at the varsity guard position. The highlight of that championship season was the defeating of Duval High School of Jacksonville, FL. at Jacksonville, 27-0 in January of 1921. Dick was a sophomore at that time.

One summer, shortly after the Duval game, Dick, R.B., and a third young man secured jobs working as car drivers for a Boston new car agency on Commonwealth Avenue in Boston. Their assigned routine was to take the train from Boston to Buffalo, N.Y., where this particular make of car was manufactured (the Essex?), and then with great care to drive the new cars over the poor, mostly gravel roads, back to Boston. The main idea was to keep the speed under 35 m.p.h. and to avoid any accidents; after all these were new and expensive cars. However their employer should have realized that boys would be boys. According to Dick, they would get the three cars up to 60 m.p.h. on the gravel straightaways and race one another, with the gravel bouncing back on the rear cars, which

chipped paint and pocked windshields, nice!

The high point (or lowpoint) of the trip was when, just after going down a very steep hill, the driver of the first car had to suddenly apply his brakes. The second car which had followed too closely collided with the lead car and the third car, which had followed the second car too closely, collided with the rear of the second car.

At long last, the battered "new" cars arrived at their delivery point, which was the new car showroom in Boston. And that was the END of that job for the boys. I would imagine that it took more time and effort than usual to recondition the cars up to showroom appearance!

Probably it was the next summer or shortly thereafter that Dick, fired from the car delivery job, secured a job in the Haverhill area working for a company that reconditioned large metal boilers. Dick's job (in the suffocating summer's heat), was to crawl into a boiler and to then chip away the scale that had accumulated on the interior. Dick stayed with this job for just the one summer and that was enough! Give him a break!

My uncle had a strong interest in guns from an early age. Perhaps he followed the footsteps of his uncle - Fred Downes, who converted a locomotive axle into a two foot cannon while attending grammar school!

To continue with my uncle's interest in guns: when he was about twelve years of age, while showing a friend a revolver in a second floor bathroom (over the music room), he managed to accidentally fire a bullet through the music room ceiling while his father was trying to conduct a music lesson in the music room below. I'm sure father straightened out the problem rather quickly!

Over the years Dick developed a rather good gun collection. On one of my yearly visits, Dick took me into the cellar where he kept a number of his prize guns. While showing me the gun that was allegedly used in the famous Sacco-Vanzetti case that was tried in Boston during the twenties, he dropped the gun while standing in front of me! I envisioned the gun hitting the concrete floor and going off and I ending with a bullet in my leg, all this thought in a milli-second. Fortunately, the gun was not loaded and

it did not fire. You win some and you lose some.

While on a visit to the Bradford Downes family one weekend during the 1960's, Dick wanted to show my wife and I how secure his house (329 South Main) was, as there had been a number of local break-ins. First, he showed me his burglar alarm system and then starting in the dining room, he pulled a loaded 45 caliber automatic, a regular cannon, from the open top of a china cabinet - impressive! We then proceeded room by room through the first floor and he had a gun in each room; a 38 here, a 32 there. My memory may be wrong but I recall him showing me a gun he had just removed from the bathroom in the music room. Give me a break! The bathroom Dick? I did not envy the would-be burglar who might have attempted to break into 329 South Main, as in my opinion, Dick would not have hesitated to fire at an intruder.

Almost forgot: Dick married Irene Wilson Grimmer, daughter of the High Sheriff of St. Stephen, New Brunswick, Canada. Irene was an R.N. at the Hale Hospital in Haverhill. They eloped (in order to cut expenses, as money was in very short supply), and were married on April 29, 1930 at Kingston, N.H.

The newly married couple lived for several years in a newly created (by Dick) apartment on the third floor (ex attic), of his mother's house. There was a great view of the entire neighborhood from this apartment as there was a gradual down slope from the rear (westward side) of the large house at 329 South Main. After several years, the couple purchased a comfortable house at 14 Allen Street, immediately adjacent to the lateral rear of the 329 house. In fact, their yards joined.

A son, Richard Hill Downes was born to the couple on July 2, 1938 at Haverhill, MA. Richard is now an Episcopal priest and is the Chaplain at the Lawrenceville School (private) at Lawrenceville, N.J. Richard is a graduate of Bowdoin College (Maine) and the General Theological Seminary of N.Y.C.

For years, Dick and Irene had a summer cottage (camp) at the southwestern section of Lake Winnepesaukee, a 25 mile long lake in east central N.H. The nearest town was Smith Point. Dick had purchased the

camp from a retired school teacher who was from the Haverhill area. Dick kept the camp in first class condition and he even rigged fake security devices that looked to be the real item.

On occasion he would arise at five a.m. in order to witness a very high speed performance boat go through its paces at over 100 m.p.h. Early morning was chosen for the speed run as the water surface was smooth and there were very few other boats on the lake at that early time.

Speaking of boats on the lake: Uncle Dick had the option in the 1950's, of either purchasing the land adjacent to his camp or purchasing a "power" boat. He elected to purchase the boat and he could have kicked himself later for his choice, as eventually the empty lot was sold and a new cottage was built quite close to his.

Dick and family enjoyed their new dream boat, but all good things may come to an end. It seems that Dick and Irene were showing the lake and certain impressive lake estates to visiting friends. While pointing out a particular estate and with his attention riveted on the estate, Uncle Dick managed to total the boat when he ran it up on a large submerged rock. Most embarrassing! He had the remains brought back to his camp where he partially rebuilt the boat. He later sold the boat at a substantial loss.

Uncle Dick definitely liked speed. A good chance to take his new Karmann Ghia car (or whatever), occurred when the first link in the future Maine Turnpike was completed about 1950? This first link ran from Kittery north to Portland. When he presented his time stamped ticket to the ticket taker at the Portland ticket booth, the man couldn't believe the starting time stamped on the ticket at Kittery. Uncle Dick had set a new record (illegal) for the Kittery - Portland run!

Dick and family would make the Bradford (Haverhill) to St. Stephen, Canada run about once a year, so as to visit Irene's relatives at St. Stephen, thus the opportunity to continue the "testing" of the Karman-Ghia on the Maine turnpike. It seems that on one run north, Dick ran into racing competition with an 18 wheeler truck driver. Mile after mile the race went on and to Irene's horror neither driver would slow down as they approached the Portland toll booth. (The Portland collector had his

problems). Both vehicles roared through at high speed. I don't know who "won" but I understand that Irene had to be assisted from the sports car at the next rest stop. Perhaps it was already TOO LATE for Irene!

Dick and Irene were in regular attendance at the midget car races at the nearby Groveland racing track. Dick also took flying lessons. I don't know whether he acquired a private pilot's license or not. Dick also owned and used a 1930's style diving suit, which he used mostly at the lake. (I don't want to spell Winnepesaukee). This diving suit had a circular metal head and a heavy-duty glass eyepiece along with a heavy-duty canvas body. A person in a rowboat or on a dock would pump air to the diver by means of rubber hoses. Primitive, but it could do the diving job. Perhaps Dick used the suit to look for the remains of sunken boats, including his own.

My uncle was basically a trusting soul. For example, he told this story on himself: that after a heavy snow storm, he hired two 'teenage boys to shovel out at 329. His only error was that he trustingly paid them PRIOR to their doing the work. When he went out to check on their work, no snow had been shoveled and the two boys were long gone.

In the middle 1930's Dick wished to improve his economic status and he took evening and week-end courses at either Boston College or Boston University. (If you know which college, cross out the wrong one, please). These were courses in social welfare administration for which he received either an Associates degree or a Certificate. (If you know which one, cross out the wrong one, please). As a result of his endeavor, he served as Supervisor of Haverhill's Old Age Assistance Program from 1937 to 1949. He was appointed the very first Director of the Haverhill office of the MA. Department of Public Welfare from 1949 to 1963, at which time he "retired." Actually, he didn't truly retire, as he was frequently on call to assist local tradesmen with furnace, machinery and plumbing repairs. He especially enjoyed working on any kind of engine.

Uncle Dick died December 5, 1979, at 74 years of age. He had been a life-long resident of Haverhill. Both Irene and Dick are buried at Elmwood Cemetery, Bradford, MA. (the services for both Irene and Dick were held at Trinity Episcopal Church in Haverhill. Their son, Richard Hill

Downes co-conducted their services at Trinity Church).

Note: Richard Hill Downes became a canon by being on the staff of the National Cathedral Church in Washington, D.C in the 1970's.



*1935 –Elite crew, Taken on music room porch, Downes House,
L to R:*

*Irene Downes, Philip Chandler, Richard Downes, Patricia Downes,
Marion Downes, Hattie Maley Helen Sowers, Judy Chandler, Madeline
Chandler, Baby-David Chandler, Mary Ellen Downes, Albert Sowers*

Incidentally, I understand that Dick is still looking for his nephew, Philip Chandler, who left a heavy-duty rake laying in his uncle's back yard. This same rake then proceeded to smack Dick in the face when he stepped on it! At the time, Phil was last seen setting a new foot speed record and heading for Salem Street. (Thanks for reminding me of that story, Wingate) Sorry, Phil.

7. Dave Chandler

Cousin David Chandler (Rear Admiral, USN Ret), Captain of the Lipan; Captain of the Mahan, a guided missile destroyer. He also met with Fidel Castro during a 9-10 hour marathon dinner in Havana, Cuba. In addition, he served in Panama, Germany, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, Charleston and Guam. We are hoping for a book ☺!

Midnight Serenade

This is a family story from the turn of the century, 1890-1900, as told by Dave Chandler one night at Heatherfield at Tiverton, RI. It involves Grandpa and Grandma Maley who lived at 379 Salem Street in Bradford (now Haverhill), MA.

Gramma Maley said that after the war, Grandpa Maley “didn’t drink, but he favored his cider”. One afternoon on the walk home from work, Grandpa Maley stopped off at “Kelly’s”, a local tavern at 75 South Main Street in Bradford for a sip of “cider”. Although the details are not known, it appears that it took more than a single sip to slake his thirst. With friends, stories and good music (Kelly’s employed a fiddler for music), the time past by. As late afternoon turned to early evening turned, then late evening, Grandpa Maley realized there might be an issue when he returned to his home on Salem Street and to Grandma Maley.

With Kelly’s closing for the evening, Grandpa Maley engaged the fiddler to accompany him home. Walking to Bradford common, then left on Salem Street, past the cemetery, up the hill and then up the 60 steps to his home, the two finally arrived at 379 Salem. As Grandpa Maley started to explain his delay, the fiddler began to serenade Grandma Maley. We don’t know if they danced or sang, but Grandpa Maley survived to live another 20 or more years!

8. DOWNES HOUSE, 239 South Main Street, Bradford, MA. 1850 – 1983



The Downes home at 329 S. Main Street, Bradford, MA 1881. Ben Robert Jr. and Wilhemina purchased the house ~1850. Wilhemina ("Mina") Downes on porch. Seated in chair is Ben Robert's Jr. Mother (Herbert's grandmother)

Early home is the place where, before you had words for such knowledge, you have known the smells, the seasons, the animals, the voices, the lay of the land. No matter where you may move to, you still

bear the impression and shaping of that early home.

Based on a October 24, 1850 legal document that I have before me , the house at what is now 329 South Main St., Bradford, Essex County, MA. was sold by Leonard Johnson of Bradford to B. Robert Downes Jr. of Andover for the sum of Thirteen Hundred Dollars. Mention is made in the deed: ... "House by the highway leading to Andover" bounded northerly by land owned by Jonathan Allen [Allen Street], , westerly by land owned by Rebecca Emerson, etc., ... so many rods here and there.

Apparently, B. Robert Jr. and 'Mina (Wilhelmina) Downes had given up their teaching positions in Andover (according to family say so: Andover Academy and Abbot Academy), and they now had contracts to teach: music, art and languages, at Bradford Academy. Thus the purchase of the house in Bradford, just across the street from the academy.

The Downes house at this period (1850), was a two story, clapboard house with a small attic (heightwise), and a cellar. There were four large bedrooms. Next, (about 1870), came some remodeling.

The southern half of the attic was finished off into two bedrooms, plus a bathroom. I give the 1870-ish date for this remodeling, as the bathroom was of the style of this period: "tin" bathtub with paneled wooden sides and pull-chain toilet with overhead water box, plus two faucet washbasin, were coming into style in the 1870's. My wife's grandfather, had a similar arrangement in the bathroom of his house in Providence, which was built in 1872 [26 Humboldt Avenue]. This Downes bathroom was still in use, as originally outfitted, until about 1940.

About 1903, another major addition was made. The northern end of the house received a large "music" room on the first floor, that exited onto a porch with a single very tall colonnade and support on one corner of the porch. On the second floor, northern end, there was now a large bathroom and a master bedroom. The third floor (north) received additional attic; also there was a cellar extension, which eventually became a two-car garage. At the same time (1903), the attic roof was raised and three dormer windows were inserted on the east side (Main St. side), of the

newly raised attic. (Speak of changes!).

In the original cellar there are two back-to-back fireplaces, one almost walk-in size, with a Dutch oven to one side. The same fireplace set-up is repeated in the first floor kitchen; also with a Dutch oven to the left of the fireplace. The kitchen fireplace is a little smaller in size compared to the one in the cellar. There are also fireplaces in each of the other rooms of the original house. My guess is that the big cellar fireplace was part of a cellar kitchen, or a summer kitchen.

Based on the very old Dutch oven set-up, and a almost walk-in fireplace in the cellar, I would guess that the original house was built around 1800 or even earlier. Richard Downes (son of Marion and Herbert), told me that the original house was built in the 1780's.

At some point, perhaps the 1850's or earlier, an outdoor wooden walkway was built along the western (rear) side of the first floor kitchen. This walkway led to an outdoor large ice-box that could be opened from inside the kitchen. The iceman would place two large blocks of ice in the box by using the wooden walkway. I recall this ice-box being used until perhaps 1935, when refrigeration (electric) came into common use. The outdoor walkway and ice-box were removed about 1940-ish.

A laundry chute went from the third floor to the cellar in the area of the rear stairs. As a youngster, I was tempted to send "Whiteface" (son of "Blueberry Eyes"), the Downes housecat, down the chute and in to a laundry basket, but even I at age seven, could see that this might not be a wise move, (Grandmother!).

Oh!, almost forgot: Dick Downes finished off the remaining attic and made it into an apartment around 1932. Dick and his wife, Irene (Grimmer) Downes, (a registered nurse), were the first to live in the new apartment. A few years later, Dick and Irene purchased a house on Allen St., just to the rear and side of his mother's house. In fact, their properties joined.

In the paneled woodwork of a built-in bookcase in the first floor living room is a "secret" panel. The panel is about three feet tall by six inches

wide and perhaps twelve inches deep. Upon moving a small lever, the panel opens to enable one to hide whatever (silverware?).

To continue with conversions: The entire second floor was converted from bedrooms, into two apartments, perhaps about 1940-ish. The apartments could be reached by the front and rear staircases and were divided by the second floor hallway, which ran east-west. I recall large water-color portraits of several of the 'Mina and Ben Robert Downes children hanging on the walls of the hallway, undoubtedly the art work of 'Mina.

Each apartment consisted of a bedroom, a living-room, kitchen and bathroom. This apartment situation was a big financial asset to my grandmother, Marion (Maley) Downes, a widow since 1932. She now had four apartments: two on the third floor and now two more on the second. She rented primarily to professors at the academy, which later became a college, [Bradford College]. This apartment situation still left my grandmother the entire first floor, with plenty of elbow room.

Getting to the "music room": (added about 1903), this is the room where my grandfather, Herbert W.W. Downes, gave music lessons, composed music, etc. I can recall the room (about 1930), having two pianos and plaster busts of such famous musicians as Beethoven, Chopin, Brahms, and Schumann. (Herbert's mother 'Mina (Wilhelmina), took piano lessons from Robert Schumann's wife Clara, in Germany). The busts were on top of two or three large, six foot tall wooden cabinets on the south side of the room. The cabinets contained sheet music and books concerning music. The music room could be closed off from the adjoining dining room by heavy wooden sliding doors. There were also doors leading to the living room (with secret panel), and to the large squarish front porch. I also recall a large, fairly ornate desk with many pigeon holes (letter slots), being in the room.

Perhaps 150 feet to the rear of the house was a clay-base tennis court, regulation size. The court was enclosed by a nine foot wire fence. I would guess that the court was built between 1915 and 1920. A barn may

have originally been on the court site, as I know there was a barn to the rear of the house at one point in time. More likely, the barn was to the immediate rear of the house, where my grandmother's flower garden was located. To the rear of the garden (Allen Street side), was a small, but deep gold-fish pool with thick wooden sides. "Whiteface" frequented the pool *area*, undoubtedly on guard to protect the large gold-fish.

As a youngster, from ages seven - fourteen, I would mow the much overgrown grass (sometimes with the help of my younger first cousin, Philip Chandler), that had taken over much of the old, no longer used tennis court. The court fence had pretty much rusted out at this point (1933 -1940).

For two years, around 1930 - 1931, my grandmother, needing income during the Great Depression, ran a small tearoom, using a secondary living room, just off the kitchen and at the front of the house. This enterprise was apparently quite successful and I'm not sure why she dropped it. (She employed two women to help with the running of the tea room).

This same room, (ex tea room), was used at a slightly later date around 1932 - 1933, by my aunt Madeline (Downes) Chandler, as a kindergarten. Madeline was a graduate of Wheelock College in Boston and she was well qualified to operate a kindergarten. She later ran her school from her home on Kingsbury Avenue, just a very short distance from the Downes House. I attended her school when it was located at her mother's house, I attended VERY briefly, sometime in 1932. I was given the bounce after three or four days of attendance. [It is difficult when one has to explain to older people that one has failed sandbox]. Essentially, I think it was a matter of lack of discipline and cooperation, on her part, not mine! It wasn't my fault!

Speaking of smells that one associates with "home" (reference to opening paragraph): one of the most distinctive smells that I can remember as a child while visiting at Bradford, was the rather unusual, very steamy, hot water chemical smell that emerged from the HOT water tap in the back hall wash basin adjacent to the cellar stairs. This was

about the same spot where "Whiteface" would drop his trophy freshly captured mice, for my grandmother's inspection and praise. Over all, the steam had a very pleasant, yet very distinctive aroma. I never detected that particular aroma again elsewhere.

My uncle, Richard Downes, ("Uncle Dick"), was always available for any repair work on or in the house: furnace repair, plumbing, painting. He had the right touch, especially with mechanical problems. I know that one season around 1958, or so, Dick and my father (Robert Brooks Downes), painted the whole house. The paint job turned out fine, but Dick must have kept a close eye on my father, as R.B. had been known to paint right over stairs that had sand on them. He would say "Better traction that way".

Another Bradford memory and the last that I will mention, is sleeping in the second floor master bedroom in a twin bed as a six or seven year old, (my grandmother slept in the other twin bed), and watching (night-time), the reflected lights *from* passing automobiles being reflected on the ceiling. The ceiling was sectioned off into large squares by fairly thick three inch wide, white painted, wooden strips. A church bell from the Bradford Common area, a quarter mile down from us, would sound off on the hour. This was all very pleasant to me as a youngster.

This grand old house was sold by Richard Downes's widow, Irene (Grimmer) Downes, in 1983 or thereabouts. Irene, a wonderful person, remained in one of the Downes house apartments until her death in July of 1984.

(Irene was descended from American Loyalists, who fled to Canada from Philadelphia, after the Revolutionary War. She was the daughter of the high sheriff of St. Stephen, New Brunswick, Canada. She trained for nursing at the Chapin Hospital in Providence. R.I. and met Richard Downes while a R.N. at the Hale Hospital in Haverhill, MA.).

Note: at some point in time, perhaps around 1925, the original house numbers on South Main street in Bradford were changed to accommodate new house development, etc., so 329 was not the original house number for the Downes house.

Follow-up: a revised method for numbering Haverhill city streets was adapted in 1928. The original house number for 329 South Main Street was 167 Main St., Bradford. (Incidentally, the Town of Bradford became part of the City of Haverhill about 1897, if I recall correctly).

Addendum: As of 1983, the Downes house had 26 rooms and ten fireplaces.



The Downes home at 329 S. Main Street, Bradford, MA Photo late 30's early 40's. Ben Robert Jr. and Wilhemina purchased the house ~1850. Then the music room (far right) was added to the home during 1903. Probable Garvey sisters out front who rented from Gramma Downes.

Addendum #1 (March 1998) R.W.D:

As part of the write-up for Wilhelmina Reitz, I included a "mystery" letter (written in English) from a Mr. A.S. Bruschius. His letter is a thank-you note for a Christmas gift received from Wilhelmina. The address he gives is 140 Bockenheimer St., Christmas day, 1842. He does not list the city.

While perusing a 1998 map of Frankfurt, I spotted a Bockenheimer Strasse. This street is in the University district and is near the Frankfurt opera house. Checking a current map of Dusseldorf, I could not find a Bockenheimer(er) Strasse.

Assuming that Mr. Bruschius may have been a professor of music, was Wilhelmina making a hundred mile (one way) trip by train to Frankfurt for instruction in 1842? It is also possible that the professor may have had as a guest Madam Robert Schumann (Clara). This possible situation may have been the basis for the family story concerning Wilhelmina and her music lessons from Clara Schumann. R.W.D.

Note: Also as a possible item of interest: a Lowell Mason (see Herbert Downes unit), gave Ben Robert Downes an excellent recommendation after Ben Robert completed his music study with A.M. Johnson of Boston (Park Street Church - by the Common). Here is the recommendation, Dec. 11, 1844 - "I can also add that from personal acquaintance, I have formed a favorable opinion of Mr. Downes and am fully prepared to hear of his successful teaching," signed, Lowell Mason.

Lowell Mason, 1792-1872, was one of the leading American music authorities in the 1800's. He introduced the study of music into the Boston School system as a regular subject. He was a composer and is now best known for writing the melody for Joy to the World.

Note (8/28/10,E.F.S.D): A.S. Bruschius was indeed a composer and lived in Frankfurt during the mid 1800's. One of his compositions on file at the Die Bibliothek der Allgemeinen Musik-Gesellschaft Zürich is "Birthday song ("Smile softly") Part Mainz: Schott".

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